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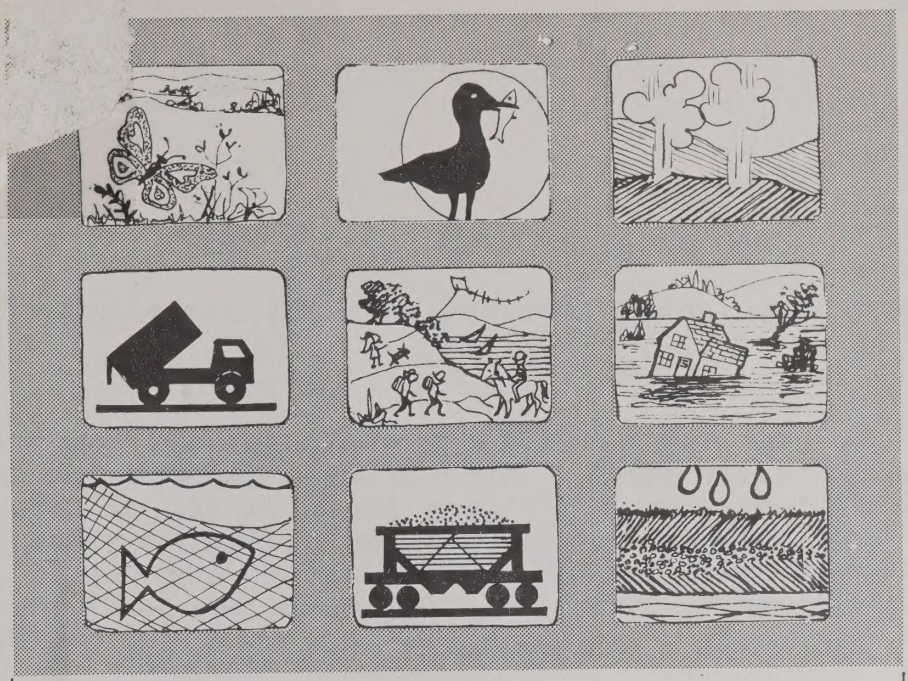
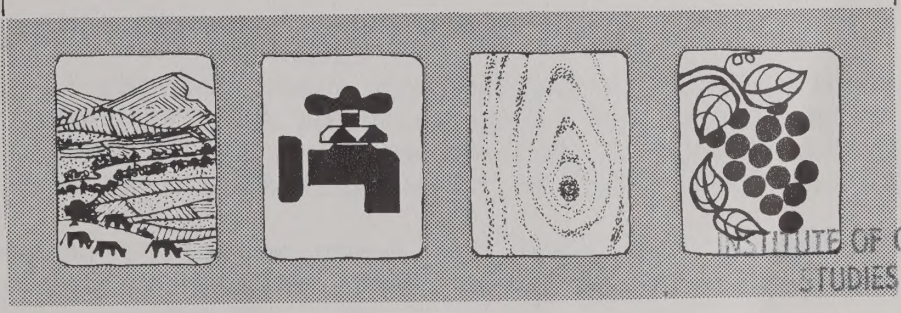


AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN



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Report of the Regional Open Space Task Force to the Regional Planning Committee

JUNE 1975

Approved by the Regional Planning Committee as a policy guideline for land and water areas of regional significance

MAY 1976

ABAG ASSOCIATION OF BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS

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HOW THIS DOCUMENT IS TO BE USED

A Statement from the Regional Planning Committee
MAY 1976

This report contains review criteria for land and water areas of regional significance. These criteria have been approved by the Regional Planning Committee to indicate to local governments how they might identify such potential areas, and to help ABAG policy-makers themselves review plans and projects which could adversely affect these areas.

Although this document does not constitute a "plan" at this time, it has been approved as a guideline to both ABAG and its member governments for understanding local development activities in a regional perspective. In order to facilitate this process, an environmental impact statement or report (or a general plan element, if it includes an assessment component) should use the following procedure if it is to address effectively regional critical area concerns:

1. It should assess first of all whether a proposed plan or project might fall within the purview of the critical area "policies," and "criteria" in this report.[1]

2. It should make a preliminary determination as to whether such activity would be consistent with the "compatible uses" suggested in this document following the statement of "policies" and "criteria."

Answering these two questions would not automatically constitute a finding that a plan or project was in fact

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[1] Users of this document should note that emphasis is placed on the written policies and criteria directly, and not simply as these policies might appear to be represented on the ABAG Regional Plan Diagram (the map accompanying the Regional Plan 1970-1990), or in the reference maps suggested in this report. These maps generally do not respond to the regional standards proposed in this document, and they therefore cannot be construed to represent regional policy but only possible spatial examples of it.

consistent or inconsistent with the Regional Plan. Ultimate determination of whether a regional interest exists in a local land use policy may be made on a case-by-case basis by the appropriate ABAG policy body. It is hoped that this report will be useful as a guide in assisting local governments, regional agencies, and developers in describing their projects in terms that will be most useful to ABAG if it chooses to make such a determination.

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1973 - 1975

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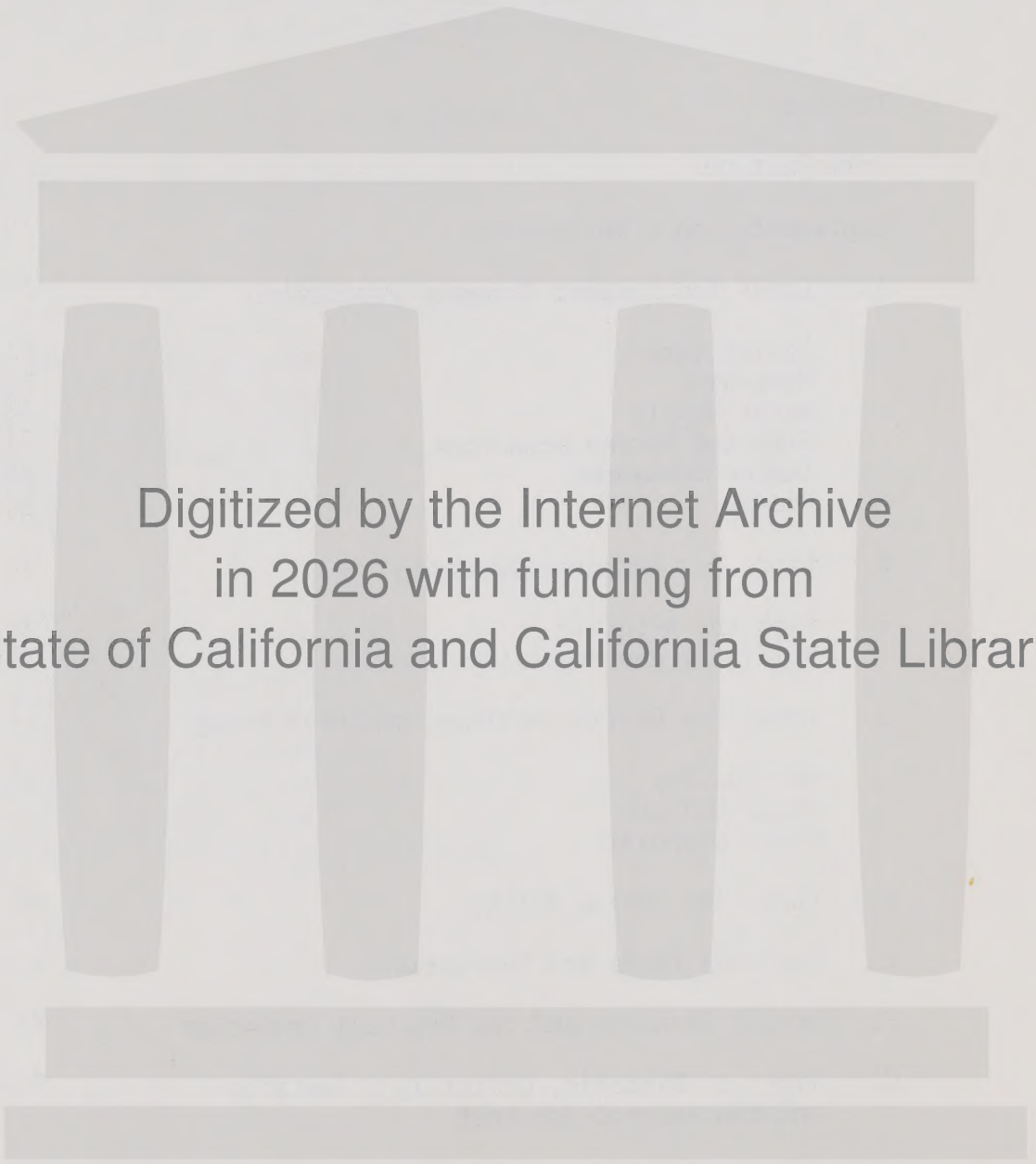
TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Preface	1
Introduction	5
Implementation - An Overview	9
A. Lands for Managed Resource Production	11
Agriculture	11
Minerals	15
Water Supply	18
Fish and Marine Resources	21
Timber Resources	24
Energy	26
B. Lands for Resource Preservation	29
Fish and Wildlife	29
Wildlands and Vegetation	32
C. Lands for Health, Welfare, and Well-being	34
Air Quality	34
Water Quality	37
Waste Disposal	41
D. Lands for Public Safety	43
E. Regional Parks and Recreation	48
F. Scenic Resource and the Regional Landscape	64
G. Sites of Historic, Cultural, Scientific and Educational Interest	71
Using the Critical Areas Policies	75
A Proposal for an Urbanization Program	79



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PREFACE

This is a plan for the management of land having regionally significant environmental characteristics. Some of these areas are important for their resource value, others for public safety concerns, still others for their human value as amenities. They are all lands which because of intrinsic qualities demand special consideration in the comprehensive planning process.

This program is a direct evolution of ABAG's earlier planning work. The Regional Plan 1970-1990 outlined broad strategies for guiding urban development in a manner which preserved urban communities, discouraged urban sprawl and protected open land. The Phase II Open Space Plan, approved in 1972, then developed a specific program of identifying the characteristics of the region's remaining open land, and determined the following land use goals: the protection of resources, the maintenance of the regional ecology, the promotion of health and safety, the provision of outdoor recreation opportunities, and the rational guidance of urban development. These concerns remain important cornerstones of the Regional Plan, and the purpose of this critical areas program is to add specificity to the Environmental framework presented in those earlier ABAG efforts.

The Critical Areas Plan and the Open Space Plan

The main difference between the ABAG Open Space Plan and the immediate Critical Areas program is that the latter embraces only those land areas in the Bay Region which have regionally important environmental charac-

teristics. This differs significantly from the Open Space Plan, which included a strategy for guiding urban development in addition to the management of environmental resources. Of particular importance in the Open Space Plan was the inclusion of a special planning category, "Open Space for Guiding Urban Growth" which was designed to include lands which had no outstanding environmental qualities but on which development would have resulted in costly, wasteful, or inefficient extension of urban services.

Since the completion of the ABAG Open Space program in 1972, ABAG has instituted a new planning activity, the Urbanization and Development program, which is specifically charged with creating a conscious strategy for guiding urban growth in the Bay Region. This program has the responsibility of carrying out the city-centered policies of the ABAG Regional Plan, which will be to continue directing growth into existing developed areas while preserving remaining land as open space. It is important to realize, therefore, that the Urbanization Program will be putting constraints on development above and beyond those spelled out in this document for Areas of Critical Environmental Concern. The effects of this dual strategy is that even if lands are not covered by the Critical Areas policies outlined in this report, they are not to be considered appropriate for urban development unless such action is also consistent with ABAG's urban development policies.[1]

Because urban development issues are now addressed in this new program, this Critical Areas program does not contain a separate strategy for guiding growth. This is done not to abandon the goals of the Regional Plan

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1. See Task Force proposal for Urbanization Program, p. 79.

and the earlier Open Space Plan, but to avoid duplication with the ABAG Urbanization and Development Program. As now proposed, the Critical Areas Plan is complementary to and supportive of the Urbanization Program.

THE CRITICAL AREAS PLAN AND THE COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL PLAN

This Areas of Critical Environmental Concern plan should be read with an understanding of its relationship both to other ABAG Environmental Resources Programs and the overall Regional Plan - 1970-1990.

A. Environmental Resources Programs:

The ABAG Environmental Resources Division will eventually develop comprehensive interdisciplinary programs in air and water quality management, and in land capability analysis. This Critical Areas Program deals only with the spatial implications of certain environmental concerns which are considered regionally significant. It is therefore not a comprehensive plan for environmental management, but rather an immediate spatial framework and policy instrument for certain regional environmental concerns as they apply to the use of land.

B. Other Planning Programs:

All aspects of the physical environment need to be translated into implications and values to the larger human environment. This Critical Areas program is therefore being prepared not as an end in itself but as an input to the larger planning process, where decisions will be made regarding environmental and other matters judged against a complete background of social and economic considerations. The ultimate goal will be to develop planning policies on environmental quality, population growth, economic growth, job needs and housing

needs, which are mutually reinforcing. In such a system, urban development must respect the critical areas outlined in this document and, likewise, the protection of the critical environmental areas identified in this report will depend as much on the implementation of a rational urban development process as it will on programs to preserve specific parcels of land.

This Is A Policy Plan

This report has been prepared as a policy plan. It will define ABAG objectives regarding certain land areas, and it will outline a process for achieving these objectives. Although many maps are referred to in the text, they are themselves not expressions of policy, but rather are cited simply to help locate certain environmental phenomena to which the policies address themselves.

Changing conditions over time may affect the relative importance of certain areas of concern and therefore the way they should be managed. New studies of environmental resources, new technology regarding how land can be used, and changing lifestyle needs and values all may alter the role of critical areas in the region, and in some cases even require new criteria for their ultimate location. This is not an end-state plan, but a program designed to accommodate a range of unforeseen future actions within a consistent framework of regional goals and objectives.

INTRODUCTION

The well-being of the Region depends to a large degree on the continued functioning of certain natural systems. The Regional Plan 1970-1990 developed a series of policies regarding environmental protection and two of those policies perhaps summarize ABAG's ongoing concern for environmental management.

1. All levels of government, all groups, and all individuals should plan for, manage, and use the limited natural resources of the Bay Region in such a way as to conserve and restore the environment.
2. All development, public and private, small and large, should minimize the degradation and destruction of natural environmental qualities.

These systems are usually complex interactions of air, water, and land components. Although a comprehensive program will eventually have to integrate considerations of all these factors, the land aspects are often the most fully comprehended, and therefore the most readily suitable for public planning and management.

Critical land areas can be defined alternately by their geologic, physiographic, vegetative or hydrologic characteristics, or by their appearance and design. Most environmentally sensitive lands are determined by the importance of their natural resources, or the processes they accommodate, or the hazards they pose for urban development. Recreation and scenic lands, on the other hand, depend slightly less on intrinsic characteristics,

and more on actual need for such resources within the region. This ABAG program outlines criteria and standards for determining where these lands are located, and prescribes methods for insuring that characteristics of these critical areas are reflected in the comprehensive planning process.

Planning for Critical Areas

The program outlined below identifies specific types of lands worthy of regional protection. In order to maintain consistency wherever possible with existing regional and local open space plans, the land categories are presented under the broad categories of Resource Production, Resource Preservation, Health, Welfare and Well-being, Public Safety, and Outdoor Recreation, Scenic Resources, and Sites of Cultural and Historic Value.

Under each of the main classifications are a number of specific functions and concerns. It should be noted that no priorities among these lands has been determined at this time. Different weights will necessarily be placed on the land areas under different circumstances.

1. Lands for Resource Production

   Agriculture
   Mineral Production
   Water Supply
   Fish and Marine Resources
   Timber Resources
   Energy

2. Lands for Resource Preservation

   Fish and Wildlife Refuge
   Wildlands and Vegetation

3. Lands for Health, Welfare and Well-being

   Air Quality
   Water Quality
   Waste Disposal

4. Lands for Public Safety
5. Regional Recreation and Parks
6. Scenic Resources and the Regional Landscape
7. Sites of Historic and Cultural Value

In the section that follows, this report will investigate each of these concerns individually. A common format has been developed so that a consistent level of analysis and set of recommendations will be presented for each category. That procedure will look at the following questions and issues.

1. The Concern	This will explain why an issue (e.g., agriculture or water quality) is important for planning consideration, and how land itself plays a role.
2. Regional Policy	This section includes guidelines for determining a <u>regional</u> interest in the various critical land areas, and suggests actions to be taken by ABAG to pursue the interest.
3. Criteria (To be evaluated together with the above regional policies)	This will indicate the characteristics or qualities the land should have in order to perform its regional functions.
4. Examples of Compatible Uses	This section will specify examples of activities which would be considered consistent with the identified regional function of the land. This information will facilitate ABAG's review of local plans and projects for consistency with regional objectives.

5. Reference Maps — No new maps have been prepared by ABAG at this time.[1] Therefore, in order to give spatial meaning to the critical areas, and to supplement the site standards, reference will be made to the appropriate existing maps. These maps are not themselves to be considered expressions of regional policy.

6. Implementation — Three proposals are made for implementation.

A. Regional Review — Projects and plans are to be reviewed against policies, criteria, and standards for compatible uses presented in each Critical Area section of this report.

B. Local Agency Actions — This section will summarize various acquisition and regulatory alternatives available to local governments.[2]

C. New Recommendations — This will contain recommendations and proposals for additional action required if regional objectives are to be implemented.

The overall goal of this program is to provide a comprehensive framework for identifying areas of regional concern, and for insuring that activities in or on those land and water areas are consistent with regional objectives.

---

1. A series of maps displaying environmental phenomena has recently been completed by the consulting firm of Wallace, McHarg, Roberts and Todd for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. Although these maps are cited in this report, they do not represent ABAG policies or planning criteria.
2. For a complete discussion of local government implementation powers, see the three volume ABAG Report, How to Implement Open Space Plans, 1973.

IMPLEMENTATION

An Overview

This report suggests three processes for implementation. A common theme in these strategies is the need for plan coordination and intergovernmental management. Although the critical areas program itself is limited to certain specific environmental goals and objectives pertaining to land use at the regional level, it is assumed that implementation of these objectives cannot be accomplished in a vacuum, and must ultimately be part of a broader planning process.

Below is a summary of this report's implementation recommendations.

1. Review Criteria

   The report spells out a specific regional interest in various land areas throughout the nine counties and presents review criteria which ABAG or its successor agency could use in evaluating the consistency of local plans and projects with regional objectives. This review procedure is a vital function in a regional planning process which endeavors to retain maximum planning flexibility at the local government level.

2. Recommendations to Local Governments

   The report makes recommendations to local governments and regional, State and Federal agencies on their roles and responsibilities in implementing regional critical area objectives.

3. Urbanization Policy

   Because land regulation of discrete areas cannot effectively occur independently of the broader strategy of guiding urban development and metropolitan growth, this report also recommends that ABAG institute an urban development policy which channels future growth into existing communities and, as a consequence, removes development pressure from non-urbanized lands.

A. LANDS FOR MANAGED RESOURCE PRODUCTION

Agriculture

The Concern

The Bay Region has some of the finest agricultural land in the nation. These lands provide important food commodities, support specialty crops grown in few other parts of the country, and produce wines of worldwide distinction. Agriculture remains one of the largest enterprises in California, and it should continue to play a special and valuable role in the Bay Area.

Regional Policy 1:

Preserve agricultural lands which serve the following functions:

a) Production of a unique or specialty crop, a high percentage of which is grown in the region (e.g. wine grapes, brussels sprouts);

b) Production of crops and commodities which, in order to realize their productive value, must be produced in locations proximate to urban areas (e.g. dairy products, cut flowers).

Regional Policy 2:

Remove pressure on agriculture and other non-developed lands by amending public service policies so as to discourage the premature converstion of such lands to urban uses.

Criteria:

a) All land which qualifies for rating as Class I and Class II in the Soil Conservation Service land use capability classifications.

b) Land which qualifies for rating 80 through 100 in the Storie Index Rating.

c) Land which supports or is capable of supporting livestock used for the production of food and fiber and which has an annual carrying capacity equivalent to at least one animal unit per acre as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

d) Land planted or capable of being planted with fruit- or nut-bearing trees, vines, bushes, or crops which have a nonbearing period of less than five years and which will normally net return during the commercial bearing period on an annual basis from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant production not less than $200 (1975 dollars) per acre.

e) Land which has returned from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant products an annual gross value of not less than $200 per acre for three of the previous five years.

f) In addition, the following standards apply to specialty crops:

(i) Wine grapes: Land that is located in the appropriate micro-climate, as identified by the University of California and the State Department of Agriculture, or in areas where technological alterations in wind and water conditions approximate the required micro-climates.

(ii) Coastal Crops: Lands on which crops which benefit from a marine dominated climate grow. (see more specific standards in the ABAG Regional Coastline Plan, p. 14)

Examples of Compatible Uses

Compatible Uses include necessary and appropriate facilities for crop production and grazing, necessary site preparation for agricultural products for shipment, processing of agricultural products (e.g. wineries, packing plants), the raising and grazing of animals, and fodder crop production as a component of waste-water treatment systems, sale and promotion of site-related products (e.g. visitor-oriented wineries and cheese factories), low intensity recreational use (e.g. horseback riding).

Growth inducing roads, utilities or other infrastructure facilities are to be discouraged in prime agricultural areas.

Reference Maps

"Prime and Unique Agricultural Lands in the Bay Area"
Soil Conservation Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, 1970

Wallace McHarg, Roberts and Todd (WMRT) MAP*
"Prime Agricultural Lands" (N-11)

Implementation

a) Regional Review - See explanation on p. 8.

Related Review Criteria

See: Water Quality

Landscape Resources

b) Local Agency Action

Appropriate agricultural zoning

Purchase and Leaseback.

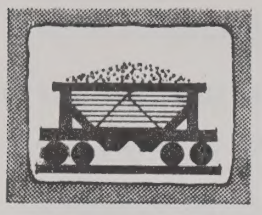
*See citation on p. 8.

Purchase as part of secondary waste-water treatment program.

c) New Recommendations (For discussion only)

1. The State of California, as part of comprehensive state-wide planning, should develop a policy on agricultural lands and food production.
2. Amendments and revisions to the California Land Conservation Act (the Williamson Act) should address the impact of the tax assessment practices on the entire urban development process, and not simply on agricultural resources.
3. ABAG, as part of its urban development planning program will develop criteria (perhaps modelled after those proposed in the Coastal plan) to govern any conversion of agricultural land to urban uses.

A. LANDS FOR RESOURCE PRODUCTION



Minerals

The Concern

Mineral resources are needed in order to meet construction and development goals for the region. Inadequate protection of lands containing those resources might preclude their future use.

Regional Policy:

Preserve for future use:

a) Minerals of strategic concern because they are in short supply, or essential to sustain life, or which are clearly crucial for national security;

b) Minerals for which there is a continuing high user demand in the region and which cannot be reasonably obtained elsewhere by reason of high transportation costs.

Criteria:

Lands or water areas containing valuable minerals such as mercury, sand, gravel, crushed rock, expandable shale, limestone, expandable perlite and volcanic cinder in quantities and under circumstances which make extraction and processing appear to be commercially feasible within 20 years.

Examples of Compatible Uses

The following activities are generally compatible:

Mining and quarrying operations, including processing of materials for shipping;

Industrial-manufacturing utilizing processed commodities;

Crop production and grazing activities which do not impair exploitation of the minerals.

With appropriate conditions, development and activities which will not deter the timely exploitation of the mineral deposits because of low installation cost or limited life, such as vineyards occupying mineral commodity reserve lands for future extraction in 15 to 20 years or process of agricultural products, utilizing out-of-doors areas or lightly constructed facilities.

Reference Maps

WMRT Map:

"Energy and Mineral Resources" (N-4)

USGS Map:

"Map showing Mineral Resources of the San Francisco Bay Region, California - Present Availability and Planning for the Future."

Implementation

a) Regional Review - See explanation on p. 8.

Related Review Criteria

See: Water Supply

b) Local Agency Actions

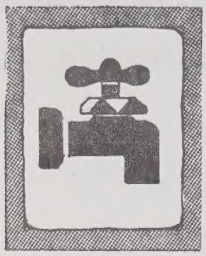
Zoning of mineral site and surrounding areas to prevent establishment of incompatible uses adjacent to mineral extraction activities.

Purchase - leaseback, especially of lands containing strategic minerals which are not immediately marketable.

c) New Recommendations (For discussion only)

1. The Federal Government should analyze and forecast future national supply and demands for mineral commodities.
2. The Federal and State Governments should identify areas of critical concern for mineral production.
3. The Federal and State Governments should adopt restoration/reclamation measures, including relandscaping of affected areas.

A. LANDS FOR MANAGED RESOURCE PRODUCTION



Water Supply

The Concern

An adequate supply of high quality water is crucial to the environmental and economic health of the Region. Although the Bay Area imports most of its water from the Sierra Nevada, the Region still needs to manage and conserve its local surface and groundwater resources.

Local water supplies may be particularly important for agriculture, recreation facilities, and small rural communities. The surface water system is made up of streams, rivers, and lakes, and the associated drainage basins which are supplied by precipitation. Groundwater supplies are directly linked to the surface and subsurface characteristics of the land. In addition to management of water supply lands, introduction of water reclamation will aid in conserving valuable supplies.

Regional Policy:

Protect lands important for maintaining surface and groundwater supplies which offer potential complementary sources of water to importation.

Criteria:

a) Surface Water:

Lands which are a part of a drainage basin associated with streams or lakes currently used for water supply, or of basins associated with large streams that exhibit a potential for use as water supply.

b) Groundwater lands must exhibit all of the following characteristics:

1. Depth to groundwater is greater than 30 meters (100 ft).
2. Permeable deposits extend vertically from land surface to the water table.
3. Water saturated deposits at least 30 meters (100 ft) thick underlie the site.
4. Storage capacity is available.
5. Direction of the flow is predictable.

Examples of Compatible Uses

The following activities are generally compatible with water supply lands: Grazing, cultivation and sustained yield management of timber production, park and recreation facilities, recreation lakes, golf courses, groundwater recharge and injection wells. Mining and quarrying may also be compatible where such activity does not impair the water resource.

Activities involving any of the following characteristics are generally not compatible with water supply lands: construction of extensive impervious surfaces over the recharge area, pollution (particularly with silt or chemicals) of the recharge area, pollution or clogging the recharge area during gravel and aggregate operations, and any other activities, including agriculture, which contribute to non-point source water pollution.

Reference Maps

USGS Basic Data Contribution #32

"Mean Annual Precipitation and Precipitation Depth-Duration-Frequency data for the San Francisco Bay Region, California," by S. E. Rantz, 1971

WMRT Maps:

"Surface Hydrology" (N-6)

"Ground Water Hydrology" (N-7)

Implementation

a) Regional Review - See explanation on p. 8.

Related Review Criteria

See: Forests

Wildlands

Water Quality

Agriculture

Landscapes

b) Local Agency Actions

Zoning

Water quality controls should be developed to govern quarrying, gravel removal, solid waste disposal, and other types of development.

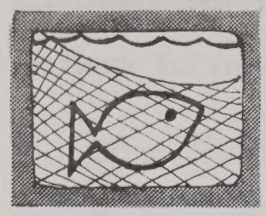
Purchase or purchase - leaseback of water supply lands by appropriate agency, such as, a water district or parks and recreation agency.

Establishment of wastewater reclamation programs.

c) New Recommendations (For discussion only)

1. Region-wide water resources planning.
2. Use of reclaimed water.
3. State legislation for water reclamation programs.
4. Better coordination of water supply agencies with local and regional general purpose planning agencies.
5. Regional standards governing user charges when municipal water supply companies furnish water to other jurisdictions.

A. LANDS FOR MANAGED RESOURCE PRODUCTION



Fish and Marine Resources

The Concern

Commercial products of marine origin are those animal and plant species that are taken from water bodies, including streams, lakes, bays, estuaries, and ocean.

These marine products, whether existing naturally or introduced and cultivated by man, relate primarily to water areas needed to sustain the life cycles of the species or associated land areas necessary for harvesting of the products or maintenance of a commercially viable crop.

An important step in conserving the particular species for which there is a commercial demand is to identify those water and land areas that are important for their maintenance and to outline methods for enhancing their capacity to support these resources.

Regional Policy 1:

Protect water areas or associated land areas which provide a commercially viable source of food or which is the source of a diversity of any commercially important species or of any species of marine life that is rare and commercially important.

Regional Policy 2:

Reintroduce mari-culture in formerly polluted water areas.

Criteria:

a) Water areas which are fish habitats which support the spawning, feeding, acclimatization or migration of any commercial species of marine life.

b) Associated land areas that support commercial fisheries.

Examples of Compatible Uses

Critical fish and marine areas should generally be restricted to the following uses:

- o the raising, harvesting and sale of fish and other marine life.
- o other uses which will not directly or indirectly cause or contribute to a reduction in water quality and thus affect the regenerative capacity of marine life.
- o other uses consistent with the BCDC Bay Plan and the California Coastal Zone Conservation Act Plan.

Reference Maps

1) Habitat areas - generalized mapping of water areas for commercially important species.

   Data Sources:

   - o Preliminary Fish and Wildlife Plan for San Francisco Bay Estuary, BCDC; map of salmon habitat.
   - o A Survey of the Marine Environment from Fort Ross, Sonoma County, to Point Lobos, Monterey County, California Department of Fish and Game; very general maps of fishing grounds for crab, oysters, flatfish, rockfish.
   - o California Department of Fish and Game, map of important fish habitat in S.F. Bay; doesn't distinguish between commercial and sport fish.

o WMRT maps - of little value for this category.

2) Land Areas - mapping of important fisheries and/or harbors as points.

Data Sources:

o A Survey of Marine Environment from Fort Ross, Sonoma County, to Point Lobos, Monterey County California Department of Fish and Game; important fisheries identified.

Implementation

a) Regional Review - See explanation on p. 8.

Related Review Criteria

See: Fish and Wildlife

Environmental Amenities

b) Local Agency Actions

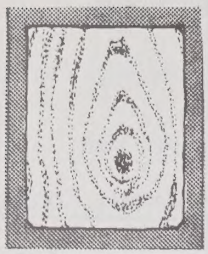
Regulations governing removal of fish and marine resources.

Riparian ordinances.

c) New Recommendations (For discussion only)

1. The strong controls exercised by the Bay Conservation and Development Commission and the Coastal Zone Conservation Commissions over fish and marine resources should be increasingly related to comprehensive regional planning objectives.

A. LANDS FOR MANAGED RESOURCE PRODUCTION



Timber Resources

The Concern

Lumber is an invaluable building material in metropolitan communities. It is also unique among construction commodities because it is a renewable resource.

The Bay Area is fortunate to have lands which can produce lumber products. The future of the timber harvesting operations in the region will depend on continued wise management of those forest resources.

Regional Policy:

Preserve lands containing or supporting an unique species found in few or no other areas, and other lands which can compliment regional needs for wood products.

Criteria:

a) Land containing stands of any species of trees which have present or clear potential commercial value.

b) Land containing stands of trees covering an area of five contiguous acres or more or which, because of visability from public places, forms an important element of a scenic resource or regional landscape.

Examples of Compatible Uses

Lands containing regionally significant forest resources should be

limited to the following uses: commercial extraction of forest products, appropriately regulated to assure that regenerative capacity is maintained and impacts on surrounding areas are minimized; low intensity recreation uses such as horseback riding; and processing of site related forest products.

Reference Maps

WMRT Map

"Plant Communities" (N-11)

California Division of Forestry

Available Maps

Implementation

a) Regional Review - See explanation on p. 8

Related Review Criteria

See: Wildlife resources

Wildlands and vegetation

Water Quality

Public Safety-erosion

Landscape resources

b) Local Agency Actions

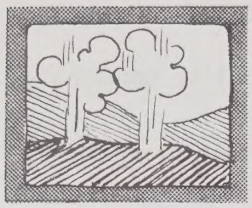
Tree Ordinances:

Exclusive timber extraction zoning, where commerical timber harvesting operations are reasonably profitable;

In some instances, planned unit development zones, requiring that great majority of property is used for forest activities.

c) New Recommendations (For discussion only)

1. The U. S. Forest Service and the State Division of Forestry should identify prime production areas, and should develop guidelines for forest management.



Energy

The Concern

There is a constant need to explore and develop new environmentally sound sources of energy. Although the geothermal resources are small in comparison with other sources particularly petroleum and natural gas, the Bay Region has over 9,600 acres of land potentially able to produce geothermal energy in the future. Whether the concept of geothermal energy extraction is sound, is beyond the scope of this report. However, it is deemed appropriate to develop or locate and preserve such lands in the Bay Region at this time.

Regional Policy:

Protect lands uniquely qualified to produce an alternative or supplement to existing forms of energy for the region.

Criteria:

Lands that contain rocks containing water or steam at temperatures from 150°C to 650°C with the potential for realization of the associated heat energy by extraction of the associated liquids. Such lands are characterized by hot spring areas with convection transfer of most of the total heat flow in shallow depths by circulating water and dry steam.

Examples of Compatible Uses

The following uses are generally compatible with lands containing geothermal resources: thermal-electric power generating and transmission facilities, Christmas tree farms, green and hothouse and hydroponic nursery farms, recreational hot springs and thermal baths, industries requiring large quantities of hot water for drying or processing of products.

Reference Maps

Map G6-1 State of California, Department of Conservation
Div. of Oil and Gas - The Geysers Geothermal Field and Potential Geothermal Resources Areas

Implementation

a) Regional Review - See explanation on p. 8

Any proposals for development and exploitation of geothermal resources must include a plan which considers the following:

- o treatment and disposal of wastewater, particularly that containing dissolved salts.
- o subsidence and collapse and other safety issues.
- o possible loss of wildlife habitat due to related construction.
- o noise and odor.
- o non-condensable gases, particularly hydrogen sulfide.

b) Local Agency Actions

Zoning.

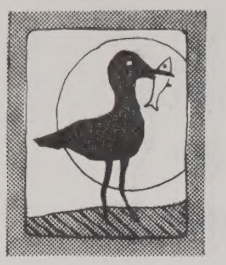
Purchase by utility companies or districts

c) New Recommendations (For discussion only)

Encourage appropriate federal agencies, including the Federal

Energy Administration, the National Science Foundation, U. S. Bureau of Land Management, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, to develop programs to support research into the problems of: geothermal exploration, the definition of the characteristics of geothermal areas, technical practices of geothermal development, and procedures and practices to minimize adverse environmental impacts from geothermal development.

B. LANDS FOR RESOURCE PRESERVATION



Fish and Wildlife

The Concern

Diversity of animal species plays an important role in the health of the regional ecology. The key to maintaining wildlife is the identification and preservation of the land which make up the fish and wildlife habitats. This section concerns criteria for defining habitats of regional significance.

Regional Policy:

Preserve the following wildlife resources and land areas:

a) Fish and wildlife having key role in a regional scale ecosystem.

b) Habitat of rare or endangered fish and wildlife that contribute to diversity of species

c) Wilderness areas and habitats of rare or endangered species of wildlife necessary in the aggregate to maintain such species at an acceptable level.

Criteria:

(to be developed)

Examples of Compatible Uses

Public park and recreational uses consistent with appropriate wildlife management practices. Obviously, filling or dredging of tidal marshes,

estuaries, or marine waters and development of any kind in spawning and nesting areas should be discouraged.

Reference Maps

WMRT Maps:

a) "Areas of Unique Value" (N-13, Chart N-13A) shows areas that should be preserved because of certain wildlife values.

b) "Preferred habitats of resident or nesting wildlife species." (Chart N-11A that goes with Map N-11) - chart associated with plant communities and presents an idealized picture of habitat extent.

California Department of Fish and Game map of important wildlife habitat (shows S. F. Bay only)

BCDC map of relative values of wildlife habitats (S.F. Bay only)

Implementation

a) Regional Review - See explanation on p. 8

Related Review Criteria

See: Fish and Marine

Wildlands and Vegetation

Regional Parks and Landscape

b) Local Agency Action

1. Zoning, including planned unit development to permanently preserve significant portions of such habitats.
2. Swamp and Wetland Ordinances.
3. Riparian woodland ordinance.
4. Purchase and leaseback to: salt mining companies, hunting clubs.

c) New Recommendations (For discussion only)

1. Expansion of San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge
2. Acquisition of more lands by State Department of Fish and Game and leaseback where appropriate.
3. Continued joint public agency planning efforts for shoreline preservation such as "Hayward Area Shoreline Planning Agency."
4. When Wildlife resources have regionally significant amenity value such areas should be eligible for State and Federally assisted Land and Water Conservation funding. These areas would be embraced by ABAG's proposed "Regional Preserve" classification.
5. Application of Doctrine of Public Trust Land (State Lands Commission).

B. LANDS FOR RESOURCE PRESERVATION

Wildlands and Vegetation

The Concern

Vegetative resources include natural settings containing trees, plants, brush and grasslands. These resources serve a parallel function to that of fish and wildlife habitats in the animal world. Neither resource contributes directly to the production of food and fiber, but both elements are essential to the life cycle of natural species or natural processes, particularly in the area surrounding waterbodies. The vegetative cover also helps maintain the regional climatic system.

Regional Policy:

Preserve lands containing the following types of vegetative resources:

a) Elements of an ecological zone of recognized importance or uniqueness.

b) Rare or endangered plant species that contribute to the diversity of species.

c) Outstanding "unspoiled" examples of vegetative communities that are characteristic of the region.

Criteria:

a) Lands in the inventory of California Natural Areas, the Natural Areas Coordinating Council.

b) Others to be identified.

Examples of Compatible Uses

Lands containing regionally significant wildlands or vegetative resources should be left substantially undeveloped. In unusual situations, certain types of highly controlled development would be compatible if clustered in a small percentage of the overall land area.

Access to wildlands may be developed to allow scientific study and interpretation, but should not be designed to encourage active outdoor recreation.

Reference Maps:

Maps to be prepared by OPR on critical plant areas

WMRT Maps: "Areas of Unique Value" (N-13 and Chart N-13a).

Implementation

a) Regional Review - See explanation on p. 8

Related Review Criteria

See: Forests

Wildlife

Public Safety

Landscapes

b) Local Agency Action

Zoning

Acquisition of ecological preserves.

Streamside or riparian protection ordinances.

Dedications of land with important vegetation.

C. LANDS FOR HEALTH, WELFARE AND WELL-BEING

Air Quality

The Concern

Open areas of land, particularly when they support vegetation, can help dissipate pollution and therefore contribute to air quality. Vegetation is particularly effective when planted in open space buffers along highways, where it can reduce the impact of vehicular emissions by facilitating pollutant dispersion and by separating other human activities from the pollutant source. Such vegetative buffers can also serve as a filtering device, removing pollutants--particulate matter--from the air.

In addition to improving air quality, open space buffers can also filter and absorb noise. This characteristic is therefore also important as an element in highway design.

Regional Policy:

Identify and protect lands whose vegetative qualities contribute to the maintenance of regional air quality.

Criteria:

Land parcels located adjacent to a point or line source (e.g. highway), which provide a buffer between the source and any exposed human activity and which are or could be planted in coniferous vegetation or heavy and leafy foliage.

Examples of Compatible Uses

Any activity which does not interfere with the filtering process provided by trees or other vegetation on the site.

Reference Maps

To be developed as part of Regional Transportation Plan.

Implementation

a) Regional Review - See explanation on p. 8

In addition, any removal of vegetation important to regional air quality should be accompanied by measures to mitigate the adverse environmental impact.

Projects of regional significance, including transportation projects, must have adequate vegetative buffers to protect local receptors from pollution impacts.

Related Review Criteria

See: Wildlands

b) Local Agency Action

Zoning regulation requiring that regional point and line sources of pollution have sufficient setbacks. (recommended width: 60 meters (190 ft.))

In cases where it is not possible to provide a vegetative buffer, zone land adjacent to source for non-residential and non-recreational purposes.

c) New Recommendations (For discussion only)

An Air Quality Maintenance Plan should be developed and implemented. The following agencies would have a special role to play in such a program:

1. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission should include consideration of air quality as a criterion for all transportation projects.
2. The Bay Area Air Pollution Control District (BAAPCD) should consider the promulgation of standards for buffer areas.
3. The State Department of Transportation (CALTRANS) should require that vegetative buffers be an integral part of highway design.
4. CALTRANS should continue investigating alternative non-polluting transportation modes.
5. The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency should specify policies--and amend its grant-in-aid programs--encouraging consideration of vegetative buffers as a supplement to point control of pollutants.
6. The State Legislature should pass legislation assuring applicability of eminent domain powers for buffer acquisition.

C. LANDS FOR HEALTH, WELFARE, AND WELL-BEING

Water Quality

The Concern

Land can play an important and creative role in maintaining water quality. Certain types of land are capable of absorbing effluent which has been processed through secondary treatment facilities. Other lands can capture storm and agricultural run-off before it contaminates surface water supplies. Land application or "land disposal" components should therefore be considered, along with advanced tertiary treatment and point control methods, as an integral part of regional water quality planning and management.

A properly designed and operated land disposal system has the additional potential for stimulating crop and forest growth, purifying wastewater while making use of the fertilizer value of the waste components, adding clean water to groundwater supplies, and making water available for a variety of re-use opportunities.

Regional Policy 1:

Identify and protect lands capable of absorbing wastewater which would otherwise have been transported to other jurisdictions, or which would have been introduced to surface water sources leading eventually to the ocean or Bay.

Regional Policy 2:

Protect those lands capable of collecting and absorbing agricultural and storm runoff which cannot be controlled at point sources in individual local jurisdictions.

Criteria:

a) Lands located in close proximity to the source of the wastewaters having sufficient permeability to absorb wastewater, and with sufficient vegetation to prevent erosion. It is desirable, but not necessary, that land be capable of supporting fodder crops.

b) Criteria developed or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency, the State Water Resources Board, or the local Regional Water Quality Control Boards.

Examples of Compatible Uses

Activities or uses which do not impair the absorbant quality of the land and compatible with wastewater disposal. Agricultural uses are favored.

Unless specific facilities have been constructed to capture agricultural and/or storm runoff, lands meeting regional criteria for water quality control should not be built upon. The majority of the land throughout a broad area should remain essentially open, and should not be covered with impermeable surfaces.

Reference Maps

"Land Application Alternatives for Wastewater management," The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Dec., 1973.

note: Over 25 potential land application sites were identified by the Corps on a preliminary basis. Of these, 13 were selected as potentially suitable, based on preliminary environmental considerations, distance from major waste source areas, and an evaluation of existing and proposed wastewater treatment facilities.

Implementation

a) Regional Review - See explanation on p. 8

In addition to normal projects and plans review against policies, criteria, and compatible uses wastewater discharge shall meet at least secondary treatment standards so as not to contaminate either the lands, surface, or groundwater resources.

b) Local Agency Action

Purchase of appropriate lands for wastewater absorption is an alternative to investing in specific wastewater management facilities. Purchase should be financed by the local agency directly responsible for water quality. These lands could then be leased back for agricultural purposes.

Large lot zoning (from 5 to 20 acres minimum), providing purpose is essentially to enhance water quality, and not to advance exclusionary housing practices.

c) New Recommendations (For discussion only)

1. Wastewater disposal sites should be planned for and preserved as part of a regionwide water quality control management system. Land use strategies should not be considered separately from treatment methods at specific facilities.

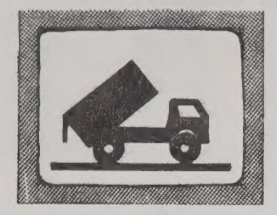
2. The Regional Water Quality Control Boards should promulgate standards for identification and selection of sites.

3. Federal Government should allow funds from Clean Water Act to be used to purchase waste-management land as an alternative, where appropriate, to construction of tertiary facilities.

4. Urge the Bay Area Sewer Services Agency to exercise its powers under its enabling legislation, Section 16682 and 16683, to assist local agencies or undertake itself to: "Acquire, construct, operate and maintain water quality control facilities, including land, disposal areas, easements, and rights-of-way." (emphasis added)

5. Recognition by ABAG and Bay Area Sewer Services Agency (BASSA) that land-extensive wastewater treatment methods should be given equal consideration when decisions are made regarding comprehensive wastewater management systems planning.

C. LANDS FOR HEALTH, WELFARE, AND WELL-BEING



Waste Disposal

The Concern

Cities, industries, and agricultural activities generate large quantities of solid waste material which must be disposed of without degrading the physical environment.

One method of meeting this need is to transport the waste material to land areas capable of holding or assimilating waste without causing detrimental impacts on either land resources, water supplies, or on adjacent activities. Satisfactory locations for waste disposal are increasingly difficult to find. Therefore, it is critical to reserve such sites for future use. Of particular concern for the Region are disposal sites for hazardous wastes that require specific hydrological and geological conditions.

This should not preclude the development of programs to reduce the volume of solid waste both through new waste management techniques and resource recovery.

Regional Policy 1:

Identify and reserve for present and future multi-jurisdictional use lands which are capable of receiving, storing, and absorbing solid waste matter transported from Bay Area communities.

Regional Policy 2:

Promote resource recovery programs and research and demonstration projects to test new concepts in waste management.

Criteria:

a) Criteria of land with respect to particular types of wastes will be available soon through the California Department of Health.

Examples of Compatible Uses

Structures necessary for waste disposal management only.

Reference Maps

WMRT Maps

1. "Surface Hydrology" (N-5)
2. "Soil Associations" (N-5)
3. Maps as they become available from the California Department of Health and the State Water Resources Control Board.

Implementation

a) Regional Review

Related Review Criteria;

See: Water Supply

b) Local Agency Actions

Lands will require acquisition and management by the appropriate agency responsible for solid waste management.

c) New Recommendations (For discussion only)

1. Solid Waste Management lands should be planned and maintained as a part of a region-wide comprehensive waste management system. Land use strategies should be assessed along with alternative methods, particularly the recycling of waste materials. Develop new "Waste Disposal Land" zoning ordinance.

D. LANDS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY

The Concern*

Lands for public safety are those areas which contain earth features and processes that pose potential hazards to human safety. These lands are different from the other critical areas in this document in that the primary reason to identify them is to protect the public from land related hazards rather than to preserve sensitive land resources.

This report only addresses those hazards related to flooding or earthquake activity. The other concerns, such as unstable slopes and soil or foundation problems, are not considered regionally significant because their interjurisdictional impacts are minor. However, because they are of obvious interest to local governments, ABAG has investigated these other concerns because they do occur throughout the region and information on them can be justified due to economies of scale. The ABAG report, Land Capability Analysis: A Method of Applying Earth Science Information to Planning and and Decision Making, is one example of this type of work.

Regional Policy #1:

a) Protect floodplains of streams that flow through more than one jurisdiction from development that will alter floodplain extent or that will be significantly damaged by flooding.

b) Protect lands subject to inundation of multi-jurisdictional extent

* This section has been substantially expanded since the 1975 printing to reflect concerns expressed at the 1976 ABAG General Assembly.

by dike or dam failure by encouraging sound construction practices for dikes, levees, and dams.

Regional Policy #2:

Protect areas that have known earthquake-related problems from premature or extremely dense development by:

a) Excouraging the recognition that lands closer to faults and of weaker materials are more hazardous to build on, and

b) Encouraging the disclosure of

- o areas and public buildings hazardous to the general public, as well as
- o geologic conditions in a parcel important to the owner and potential buyer of such property.

Criteria:

a) Floodplains

Lands within the 100 year floodplain.

b) Areas subject to inundation through dam failure

Maximum inundation area assuming gradual failure of earthfill dams.

c) Areas subject to inundation through dike and levee failure

Areas that have an elevation of less than 6½' bordering the Bay or delta and that are subject to inundation.

d) Areas with earthquake-related hazards

- o Lands within 50 feet of a known active fault trace.
- o Lands likely to be associated with a San Francisco intensity of A or B from ground shaking as related to materials and distance from active faults by Borcherdt and Gibbs (1975).
- o Land underlain by loose, saturated materials likely to liquefy in a major earthquake.

Examples of Compatible Uses

Within floodplains, uses should be limited, whenever feasible, to those types of activities which will be minimally damaged by flooding, such as certain types of agricultural uses, low intensity recreational uses, and parking. Buildings in areas that already are urbanized should be flood-proofed when made possible through redevelopment.

Regionally significant development in the inundation areas of dams, dikes, and levees known to be unstable should be delayed until structural problems can be corrected.

Development above or within 50 feet of an active fault trace should be limited to agriculture, recreational uses (such as golf courses), secondary streets, and parking. No structures should be built in this area.

In general, most types of development need not be prohibited in areas of severe ground shaking. However, any new development in these areas should meet or exceed the building code requirements of the most recent Uniform Building Code. Very critical structures, such as hospitals, police headquarters, and fire stations, should be located in areas likely to be subject to less shaking whenever possible.

Reference Maps

Flooding:

1. "Flood Prone Areas in the San Francisco Bay Region, California," J. T. Limerinos, K. W. Lee, and P. E. Lugo, USGS/HUD, San Francisco Bay Region Environment and Resource Planning Study, 1973, 3 map sheets.

2. "General Area Subject to Salt Water Flooding," in Summary of a Report to the Santa Clara County Flood Control and Water District on the Baylands Salt Water Flood Control Planning Study, January 1973.

Seismic Safety:

1. "Special Studies Zones Maps," prepared by the California Division of Mines and Geology.
2. "Prediction of Maximum Earthquake Intensities for the San Francisco Bay Region," by R. D. Borcherdt and J. F. Gibbs, USGS Misc. Field Studies Map.
3. "Liquefaction, Flow, and Associated Ground Failure," by T. L. Youd, USGS Circular 688.

Implementation:

a) Regional Review - See explanation on p.8

b) Local Agency Actions

   1. Administration of the Federal Flood Insurance program to minimize the possibility and impacts of flood damage.
   2. Administration of the state Alquist-Priolo Geologic Hazards Zones Act to prevent the construction of any structures intended for human occupancy from being placed on or within 50 feet of a known active fault.
   3. Administering a program of subdivision, hillside, and grading ordinances that requires preparation of a geologic and soils engineering report prior to development of areas subject to landsliding, erosion, or bearing material problems.
   4. Design and administer seismic safety and safety programs.

c) New Recommendations (for discussion only)

1. Help local governments use the findings and methods described in the reports Land Capability Analysis and Hazards Evaluation for Disaster Preparedness Planning.
2. Prepare a policy document reviewing the earthquake preparedness issues in the Bay Area and appropriate regional objectives and policies in response to those issues.

E. REGIONAL PARKS AND RECREATION

The Concern

The current high demand for recreational open space, particularly within metropolitan regions, is only a small part of that expected by 1990.

It has been estimated that recreation demand increases over one and a half times as fast as actual population growth. Perhaps of even greater significance is that demand for close-in recreation opportunities may increase as much as ten fold. This is due to the compound effects of living in and around cities, more leisure time, higher incomes and greater interest in the outdoor environment.

An unmistakable trend is that there will be an increasingly regional approach to providing recreation facilities. The East Bay Regional Park District was a pioneering experiment in creating regional-scale park opportunities, and it has since been joined by two different but related districts, the Marin County Open Space District and the Mid-Peninsula Regional Park District in Northern Santa Clara County. Finally the State of California has mandated that Federal Land and Water Conservation Funds, the main source of Federal Assistance for Outdoor Recreation Facilities, be used expressly for projects that are of regional significance.

Although Regional-Scale parks are receiving increased importance there is no single agency responsible for proposing and maintaining regional parks at the nine-county level. With the exceptions of the three special subregional districts, park planning and maintenance is conducted either at the city and county level, or directly by the State and Federal governments.

Regional Policy

a) To provide park and recreation facilities desired by citizens of the region which because of their size and cost or unusual nature cannot be provided by local governments.

b) To provide facilities or programs whose constituency is small in any one jurisdiction but substantial at the regional level.

c) To supply certain specialized recreation activities which might not be provided by existing agencies, but for which there is a clear demand. (e.g. lands for recreation vehicles, rock concerts, hunting, etc. These activities would be subject, of course, to environmental regulations)

Criteria:

For the purpose of this program, a parkland site is deemed to be of regional significance if by virtue of its overall character and location it is capable of generating and sustaining significant use by the general public from adjacent communities.

The "character" of the park is a measurement of the match between the physical, spatial and psychological needs that the proposed uses might fulfill and the actual physical conditions of the site. For immediate ABAG purposes, this determination will be made by subjecting project

proposals to the criteria and standards of the ABAG Regional Parkland Classification[1] System, which is presented below.

a) Regional Park

Definition

A Regional Park is a spacious area where outstanding or natural features are preserved and a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities and facilities are provided for public enjoyment and education. It includes areas that will provide for public access to and protection, preservation, and recreational use of natural lakes, rivers, and permanent streams. Projects in this category include acquisition to provide improved public access to existing recreational facilities.

Regional Standards

For an area to be considered suitable for designation as a Regional Park, it should possess the following general characteristics:

1. A Regional Park will generally have at least 100 suitable acres.
2. Approximately 50% of the area must have, or potentially have, a scenic or natural character.
3. Approximately 25% of the area must be suitable for accommodating a variety of recreational activities.

b) Regional Recreation Area

Definition

A Regional Recreation Area is a site which is developed for intense

[1] In 1972, ABAG began a joint project with the East Bay Regional Park District to create a Master plan for Parks and Recreation. The Classification System developed in that effort has been adopted as the basis of the Nine County Regional Park Program described in this document.

outdoor recreational use. This classification includes areas that will provide for public use of natural and manmade water features, and land areas designed to accommodate special recreational activities (such as use of off-road-vehicles). The development of Regional Recreation Areas provides the best opportunity for insuring that the recreational desires of all of the region's diverse population and special interest groups are satisfied. Projects in this category could either be specialized recreational facilities, or sites designed to provide a wide variety of recreational activities.

Regional Standards

1. A Regional Recreation Area should be located close or have excellent access to the population served, and should be designed to accommodate large numbers of users.
2. Development for recreational use should be compatible with any significant environmental features contained within or adjacent to the Recreation Area. The land and facilities must be capable of withstanding the impacts of intensive public use.
3. A Regional Recreation Area must be planned to contain recreational resources of special significance -- these resources might be pre-existing natural features developed to enhance their recreational potential, or they might be manmade features that are specifically designed to provide for maximum recreational enjoyment.

c) Regional Shoreline

Definition

A Regional Shoreline is an area of land (and related water area) located on the ocean coastline, or on the edge of San Francisco Bay, San Pablo Bay, Suisun Bay, the Carquinez Strait Shoreline, and the Delta, which has significant recreational, natural or scenic values. It includes areas that will provide for public access to and protection, preservation, and recreational use of ocean, bay and river frontage. Projects in this category include acquisition and development projects primarily for visitor access and recreational use of shorelines.

Regional Standards

For an area to be considered suitable for designation as a Regional Shoreline it must possess one of the following characteristics:

1. A shoreline area (or grouping of smaller areas connected by trail or water access) possessing a variety of natural shoreline environments and manageable units of littoral, tidal, near shore areas and uplands which have value for scientific or educational purposes with at least 5 to 40% of the area suitable for accommodating a variety of regional shoreline recreational activities.
2. A shoreline area of land and related water suitable for providing opportunities for a variety of regional shoreline recreational activities such as swimming, fishing, boating, or other public shoreline uses.
3. A unique visual experience.

d) Regional Wilderness

Definition

A Regional Wilderness is an expansive area of natural environment preserved for the purpose of providing a place for man to be isolated from the urban scene in a setting where natural qualities and forces are dominant.

Regional Standards

For an area to be considered suitable for designation as a Regional Wilderness, it should possess the following characteristics:

1. An area suitable for wilderness, usually larger than 3,000 acres. A total unit potential for both access areas and areas which do not necessarily have unrestricted public access may exceed 10,000 acres.
2. The area must be generally undisturbed, natural, and roadless. The area may, however, contain narrow low-use roads which may be abandoned if not needed, or used by public safety and maintenance vehicles for access to the Regional Wilderness.
3. In order to provide a "wilderness feeling" the area must be sufficiently wide at all points so as to prevent the penetration of noise foreign to wilderness.
4. The viewshed from within the wilderness unit should be generally undeveloped. Within that viewshed, development must be prevented whether through acquisition, lease, adequate land-use controls, easements, or the commitment of another public agency owning the surrounding land.
5. Adjacent to, or nearby the wilderness area, there must be one or more areas suitable for staging purposes.

e) Regional Preserve

Definition

The objectives of a Regional Preserve are to protect special natural or historic features, and to make them available for the enjoyment and education of the public. Features protected might be archaeological, botanical, geological, historical, cultural,[1] scenic, or wildlife resources. Included in the Regional Preserve category are lands whose primary resources are comprised of marshland, lagoons, bays, estuaries, or visually sensitive or prominent landscape features. A Regional Preserve need not always provide extensive public access.

Regional Standards

For an area to be considered suitable for designation as a Regional Preserve, it should possess the following characteristics:

1. The area must have one of the following features:
    a. An element of remarkable natural wonder or scientific importance (such as rare or endangered or protected plant and animal species and their supporting ecosystems, features illustrative of geological processes, significant fossils or geological features, or unusual topographic features).
    b. An element of regional significance associated with the history, tradition or cultural heritage of the Bay Area, which merits preservation.
    c. Elements which are visually sensitive components of a regional landscape area which has special characteristics valued by Bay Area residents.

[1] See policies on Man-Made Resources. p. 71 .

2. In order to insure protection of the element, the area must be either:

   a. Of sufficient size to insure an appropriate atmosphere for protecting and enjoying the element; or

   b. Subject to adequate comprehensive planning controls that will prevent the adverse development of surrounding lands and waters.

f) Linear Park and Trails

Definition

Areas developed for one or more varying modes of recreational travel, such as hiking, biking, horseback riding, canoeing, and driving. They may be designed around natural or manmade linear resources such as utility corridors, rights of way, drainageways, bluff lines, vegetation patterns and roads. A linear park may be a linear facility itself such as a trail, or a component of a linear landscape or recreation corridor, such as a wayside park.

Regional Standards

1. Sufficient width to provide maximum protection of resource and maximum use.
2. Sufficient length to accomplish purpose.

Reference Maps

ABAG is currently preparing a working map which will show all federal, state, regional and local park facilities which meet the above criteria. Until the definitive map of regional parklands is available, the following maps may be used for reference:

East Bay Regional Park District Map

Marin County Open Space District Map

Mid-Peninsula Regional Park District Map

City, County and special district maps.

Implementation

a) Regional Review

ABAG's primary role in regional park planning is to make recomendations to the State on allocation of Federal Land and Water Conservation funds. To do this, the Association must determine priorities among competing projects proposed by local governments and agencies. In order to facilitate this process, the plan proposes four criteria or "tests" to which local applications must be subjected. Although this program does not at this time propose a method for quantitative ranking or scoring, it is expected in general that for a project to receive ABAG support, it should meet each of these tests favorably. A negative score in one test, however, may be offset by an unusually high score in another category, but none of the criteria alone provides a basis for decision. For example, land which is merely "threatened" may not by itself possess values which make it worth acquiring (and furthermore, land acquisition should not be the only method of holding land back from premature urbanization).

The four tests are listed below:

1. Need and Demand

ABAG does not at this time have a program for determining recreation demand. Therefore, the Association must make the assumption that all local applications for park funds have

already been subjected to certain need criteria. It will be ABAG's goal to insure that a full range of park facilities are distributed around the region, based on location of present and anticipated population.

The key factor in recreation planning is that planning must be done for the park users as much as for the parks themselves. Therefore, the ABAG park framework will be based on the location of park users. To translate the present nine-county region into a community of park-users, the region has been broken down into seven population clusters, representing the seven main urban communities in the Bay Area. Figure 1. (p.65) indicates the spatial location of these clusters in the region. Figure 2. suggests a relative indication of size of each of these seven clusters.

It is assumed that each of these clusters has what might be called a sphere of influence, in which facilities such as parks might be located. Although the size of these spheres will differ according to various factors (see Section on "accessibility") it is proposed that for any regional park to meet the needs of a particular sub-regional population community, it must fall within the appropriate sphere.

On assessing over-all sub-regional need, an effort will be made to distribute facilities according to the relative population of each sub-area. Therefore there should be a larger total package of regional parklands available to a more populous area than to a smaller one. However, it is also important to

FIGURE 1.

Spatial Location of
Population Clusters

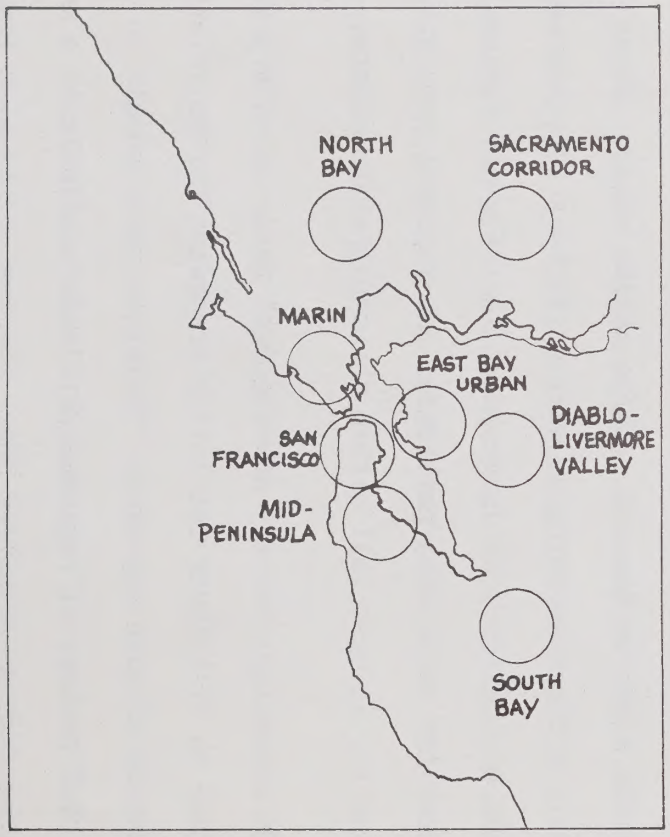
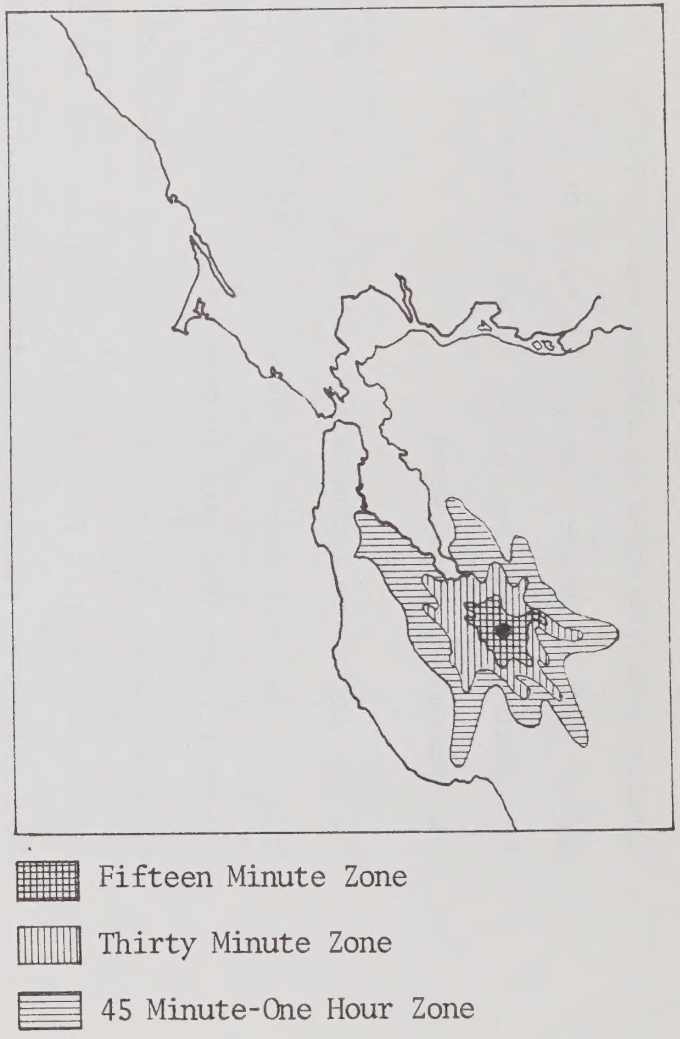


FIGURE 2.

Example of Access Zones
(From South Bay Area)



(These charts are for illustrative purposes only)

remember that park facilities do not have to be located in the users' actual jurisdictions, but simply within the appropriate access zones, which are presented below. Therefore, some of the existing East Bay Park system might meet the needs of parts of Santa Clara County, while a wayside or linear park in the Napa Valley might supply regional needs for San Francisco or the urban East Bay.

2. Accessibility

Parks must be available to the people who want and need them. Accessibility, therefore, is an important factor in planning and managing a regional park system.

Although some degree of accessibility is clearly necessary for any park category, its absolute importance depends on the type of park experience being offered. It is especially desirable that a regional Recreational Area, for example, be located close to its users. While access is important to Regional Wildernesses and Regional Preserves, it is less important than the natural and cultural features of the land which give the areas their intrinsic values.

For regional park planning purposes, the following accessibility guidelines are recommended for each parkland category.

Parkland Category	Accessibility
Regional Recreation Area	Should be located no more than 15
Regional Park	minutes from urban areas, should

Regional Shoreline	be accessible either by a short walk or drive from home, or a short walk from a present or proposed bus or transit route.
Regional Preserve Linear Park	No more than 30 minutes from urban centers, by either car or transit.
Regional Wilderness	Between 45 minutes and one hour from urban center.

The diagram in Figure 2 below displays a number of access zones for each of the seven population sub-areas. The rings show transportation access from selected centers for intervals of 15, 30 and 45 minutes. These zones approximate the time it would take, either by automobile or by appropriate transit, to reach the outer rings on an average non-rush hour day.

For a proposed or existing parkland to meet the regional criteria for accessibility, it should be located within the appropriate access zone.[1]

3. Threat of loss

The degree to which a proposed site is actually threatened by urbanization will be determined by investigating if the following factors are present:

- Development proposals are known to be in preparation.
- Urban services are available within the site.
- The local government has declared a policy to urbanize the area.

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[1] Zone access system to be developed by ABAG Technical Services Division.

- The current use or management is beginning to destroy the site qualities.
- Property is up for sale.
- Development has been approved on adjacent property.
- Water or sewer lines could be easily extended.

The greater the threat of loss of a certain piece of property, the greater is the urgency to consider acquiring the land. This criterion, however, must be weighed against the above criteria for suitability, need, and accessibility.

4. Ease of Acquisition

This is a complex criterion, and can only be evaluated in terms of the costs of alternative projects. It is impossible to suggest actual cost standards, but three particular features would enter into ranking a site in terms of ease of acquisition:

1. The per acre costs of acquiring the land and its improvement.
2. The total cost of acquiring the land and its improvement.
3. The ownership status of the land i.e. the number of land owners and their willingness to sell their lands.

In general, the lower the various costs, the higher score a project would receive for this category. Obviously this criterion is not useful by itself. Only when compared with the factors cited above does it become an additional criterion on which to make an intelligent judgment on the relative worth of a particular park proposal.

Applying the priority system

The purpose of the system is to determine park priorities by

subjecting project proposals to the above parkland acquisition criteria. It goes without saying that the system is incomplete. There is always the possibility that it will ignore certain key features. Furthermore, the criteria themselves would have different weighting depending on the parkland classification. Therefore the above system will still need to be supplemented with considerable independent judgment and evaluation.

Still, it can be used as a method to aid ABAG in making difficult decisions among competing projects. The framework itself is not a plan for regional parks, but rather a system, to be used by elected officials and planners, to make decisions on an ongoing basis, on how scarce resources are to be used to finance park projects of regional significance.

b) Local Agency Actions

Local agencies which wish to secure regional funds (e.g. Land and Water Conservation Funds) should propose projects which meet the review criteria adopted in this plan.

c) New Recommendations (for discussion only)

1. The State of California should adopt the proposed regional planning framework for its Land and Water Conservation funding programs in the Bay Area.
2. Because there is no agency responsible for implementing regional parklands, and because the limited sources from the Land and Water Conservation Fund are insufficient to finance more than a few facilities, it may be necessary to seek additional funding specifically for regional projects. Two

steps are proposed:

(i) Prepare a regional plan for parks to be used as a basis for assessing lands and establishing priorities in existing agencies.

(ii) Special districts (such as water and utility districts) should, when possible, develop regional recreation facilities as part of their overall land management program. This applies particularly to EBMUD and the San Francisco Water District.

F. SCENIC RESOURCES AND THE REGIONAL LANDSCAPE

The Concern

The outdoor environment that people use and enjoy consists of far more than parks. This section looks at lands which are not directly related to the active recreational experience, but which provide visual and emotional value to the people who see them.

Such sensory experiences include views of ridgelands and mountains, the bay or the ocean coastline. The sight of open land surrounding urban centers provides similar satisfaction, and so too does a drive through the inland valleys or the rich agricultural districts of the Bay Area. In most of these cases, physical access is not important, but visual access is paramount. Although the public's concern for the environment is largely expressed in terms of visual images derived from these kinds of experiences, there have been few planning efforts designed specifically to analyze the visual resources that give rise to the images. This is unfortunate, because, to many people at least, the vision and feel for the physical environment may be what "open space" is all about.

This planning program will attempt to suggest a regional approach to dealing with these broader landscape questions. It will examine a wide

range of concerns expressed frequently by public and private agencies, such as the need for "visual relief from urbanization," "community identity" and "breathing space." Although each of these concerns involves the appearance of the landscape, there are other considerations as well. For example, some Bay Area communities are surrounded by hillsides in their natural state, or other open lands that are thought of as "open space buffers" or "greenbelts" that help the communities retain a sense of local identity or character. However, there are other factors such as historic and ethnic traditions or special patterns of uses and activities that mold local environments and people's perceptions of them in ways that also contribute to a sense of "community identity." Therefore, the landscape concerns have to be seen as part of a larger urban design process that recognizes the many dimensions of landscape experiences and images and relates them to the comprehensive planning process.

Regional Policy:

Protect landscapes or landscape elements that are viewed, used or appreciated by the region's population, or by visitors.

Criteria:

Features of land and water areas of critical regional concern for Scenic Resources and the Regional Landscape are:

a) Characteristic or unique landscape settings (such as coastal headlands, redwood forests, or agricultural valleys)

b) Major land forms or landmarks (e.g., San Bruno Mountain, Mt. Tamalpais, Mission Peak)

c) Areas within the viewshed of:

   i. the Bay

ii. scenic highways

iii. regional transportation corridors

iv. communities visited frequently by those from around the region or outside the region

v. major population and activity centers.

Reference Maps:

WMRT "Amenities" (VL 1 - 3)

BCDC Appearance and Design

East Bay Parks

Data Sources:

California Coastal Zone Conservation Plan

Implementation

a) General Considerations

A formal implementation program for scenic and landscape resources cannot be developed until a planning framework is adopted. In order to begin that program the Association would:

1. Continue research on regional visual and landscape values and adopt policies to protect certain key components or total landscape features throughout the Bay Area. Procedures for a systematic study of the region's scenic and landscape resources has been outlined in a staff technical report, "Identifying Regional Landscape Resources."
2. Investigate joint programs with other agencies for the use of computerized landscape analyses, such as the VIEWITT system.
3. Encourage public agencies and park departments to set aside non-park landscape preserves in addition to parklands. These

would be maintained through a combination of acquisition and land regulations. Where threat of loss is imminent, ABAG will coordinate acquisition programs of various levels of government. The four "tests" suggested for the Regional Park Program would also apply to landscape and greenbelt acquisition.

4. Work with private agencies toward preserving unique landscape resources and coordinate their efforts with public agencies.
5. Integrate regional landscape resources into the Regional Park planning process, so that priority land categories identified by ABAG can also include parcels and easements contributing to landscape preservation.
6. As part of any possible request to the State Legislature authority for park funding, include non-park landscape projects among the Association's priorities.
7. In the event a regional plan is established, include landscape considerations among its priorities.

b) Regional Review

The main goal of a landscape program is to enhance visual and sensory values, and not necessarily to protect ecological systems or to implement broader comprehensive planning goals. Some general conditions are listed below for ensuring that plans and projects have minimal impact on regionally recognized scenic and landscape resources.

1. Major developments should be screened from general view, if possible, and not be allowed to interfere with ridgelines.
2. Developments, if exposed, should employ colors and materials

which blend in with, rather than contrast with, the surrounding scenic environment.

3. Roads should fit the natural topography of the land.
4. In forest areas, man-made structures should not exceed the height of the forest canopy.
5. Vegetation should be replaced if removed, preferably with native species or species that complement the landscape.
6. Scenic corridor projects should include vista points and linear or wayside parks which provide an opportunity to view scenic features and landscapes.
7. Those public views from scenic corridors or linear parks should be protected and enhanced.

Related Review Criteria

Agriculture

Lands for Water Supply

Forest Production Lands

Wildlife and Vegetation

Recreation

Sites of Historic, Cultural, Scientific, and Educational Interest

c) Local Agency Actions

1. Purchase of scenic easements, corridors, greenbelts, or entire parcels of land is clearly the most costly method. It would have to be done as part of an overall capital improvement program, and in particular, would probably be done as an alternative or supplement to more traditional parklands acquisition, depending on the needs and desires of the constituency. Such a program should be based on a comprehensive

needs analysis of the principle beneficiaries. Certain jurisdictions in the region have already set out to acquire what has sometimes been referred to as "non-park open space."

2. Design controls: height limits, sign ordinances, architectural standards.
3. Cluster Housing, Planned Unit Development Ordinances.
4. Institute a strong urban development program, which will control how urban expansion is to occur, with the effect and objective of leaving certain fringe lands open. This must be done as part of an overall development process, pursuant to a comprehensive set of goals not limited to the preservation of the visual quality of the environment.
5. Zoning. In the absence of urban development constraints cited in the above recommendation, zoning measures other than PUD ordinances and design standards may be subject to difficulty. (See ABAG Implementation Report, Vol, II, Chapter 1)

d) New Recommendations (For discussion only)

State of California

The State Department of Parks and Recreation, as the main state agency charged with outdoor amenity planning, should develop and integrate its landscape province programs with its park programs.

The Department of Parks and Recreation should work with the Federal Government in clarifying guidelines for Land and Water Conservation Funding programs, and coordinate these policies with regional priorities.

Federal Government

The Department of the Interior should revise its guidelines regarding the use of Land and Water Conservation Funds to include the financing of non-park scenic and landscape features of regional significance.

The Department of Housing and Community Development should include in its "eligible activities" under the 1974 Housing and Community Development Act, Section 570.200, paragraph (iii), clear guidelines as to what kind of Federal financial assistance is available to local and regional agencies landscape planning programs.

G. SITES OF HISTORIC, CULTURAL, SCIENTIFIC, AND EDUCATIONAL INTEREST

The Concern

Actions should be taken to protect special man-made resources. These include historical preservation, protection of special areas for scientific study and other areas having a potential for enriching the learning experience.

The following resources have the potential for regional significance:

1. Cultural and Historic

   Special communities with unusual population groups, customs, etc.

   Communities with special architecture, relation to landscape, etc.

   Houses and other structures

   Monuments

   Historic sites and settings (e.g town squares)

2. Scientific (to be prepared)

   Phenomena of interest to the following disciplines

   - Anthropology
   - Archaeology and Palaeontology
   - Botany
   - Geology
   - Other

3. Education (to be prepared)

- Farms, other facilities, in urban communities
- "re-creations" of historic communities, atmosphere, etc.
- Interpretive centers for "Areas of Critical Environmental Concern"

At this time, this report proposes guidelines only for cultural and historic resources. Others should be developed at a future date.

Certain towns, communities and neighborhoods in the Bay Region have particular cultural, historical, architectural and aesthetic qualities that add to the richness of life in the area. These resource sites are usually characterized by their orientation to water or unusual land features, sometimes a small scale of development, accessibility to pedestrians, diversity of uses and activities, public attraction and use of facilities, distinct architectural character, historic significance, and ethnic or cultural coherence sufficient to yield a sense of identity and differentiation from nearby areas.

Regional Policy

Encourage local governments and other agencies to protect and enhance special communities and neighborhoods.

Criteria

a) Land or water area characterized by a particular cultural historical or architectural heritage and continuity that is distinctive in the Bay Area.

b) Land or water area currently recognized as important visitor destination centers.

c) Land areas whose small scale amd limited automobile traffic provides opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle access for visitors.

d) Areas whose current physical scale is consistent with and complimentary to regionally significant landforms and whose particular physical coherence adds to the visual attractiveness of the region.

e) Areas within walking distances of beaches or waterfront parks with generally over 20% of all parcels in either hotel, motel or water-oriented commercial uses.

Implementation

a) Regional Review

Development activities within special communities should be consistent with the following design standards:

1. Development should strengthen the physical form of the community or neighborhood.
2. It should enhance and restore visual qualities by being of a bulk, height, and color that is compatible with the existing character.
3. It should harmonize with the essential design characteristics that distinguish the place from other communities.
5. It should provide for maximum pedestrian circulation and access.

Notice

There is a danger that placing too heavy an emphasis on purely physical characteristics of a community may result in the perpetuation of a physical status quo which excludes certain low income or minority groups, their activities and their shelter. Because community identity must ultimately be seen as a social as well as a physical or spatial phenomenon,

design standards in this section are not meant to preclude other regional policies, most notably on housing and community development.

USING THE CRITICAL AREA POLICIES

As the designated Areawide Clearinghouse, ABAG is required to comment on a broad range of Federally funded projects. Additionally, many other projects come to ABAG's attention through requests to review on Federal and State Environmental Impact Reports. Accordingly, the Association increasingly needs a means of responding to all initiatives in the Bay Area which should be considered of regional significance.

This Critical Areas report recommends a strategy for reviewing some of these plans and projects. The review process requires two steps:

1. Determination of (a) whether a project is located in a land or water area meeting these regional criteria as a critical environmental issue; or (b) in the case of a plan, whether the areas of critical concern have been identified adequately.
2. Determination of whether a project located in such a critical area is consistent with the policies, criteria, and compatible uses specified in this report.

Some examples are cited below to illustrate how this procedure might apply to actual situations in the region. Some of these examples are drawn from actual plans or projects the Association has reviewed, others are hypothetical cases which have been chosen to best illustrate how the proposed policies and criteria would apply.

MANAGED RESOURCE PRODUCTION:

Example: A county-wide open space, conservation, or related plan element fails to identify certain mineral resources which meet ABAG criteria for regional significance and are subsequently found to exist in that jurisdiction.

Application of Criteria: This plan would be in potential conflict with the regional plan, until those critical resources were recognized and policies established for their protection which conform to the ABAG guidelines suggested in this report.

Example: A winery wants to expand facilities into prime agricultural land which is now used for growing varietal grapes.

Application of Criteria: The proposed review criteria state that site-related facilities are appropriate compatible uses, and therefore the winery extension would be consistent with regional objectives.

MANAGED RESOURCE PRESERVATION:

Example: A County plan designates a regionally significant wildlife habitat as "open space" but does not specify how the permitted activities in this area are different from other open space lands.

Application of Criteria: In this instance, more complete information would be required in order to establish consistency with regional objectives.

HEALTH, WELFARE AND WELL-BEING:

Example: A County promotes a joint agency project to recycle waste water and use it for spray irrigation of fodder crops.

Application of Criteria: This project would be supportive of regional policies, providing the land under consideration had the appropriate soil and water characteristics so as not to encourage erosion or groundwater contamination.

PUBLIC SAFETY:

Example: A local plan fails to acknowledge the 100-year flood plain and prescribe suitable ordinances or regulation measures.

Application of Criteria: Such a plan would be in potential conflict until the flood plain were recognized and appropriate control measures taken.

Example: A project located near a flood plain which met the appropriate engineering standards.

Application of Criteria: Such a project, if undertaken with adequate engineering standards, could be consistent with regional policies.

REGIONAL PARKS AND RECREATION:

Example: A city submits an application for Land and Water Conservation Funds for creation of a neighborhood park.

REGIONAL PARKS AND RECREATION, continued

Application of Criteria: If the park description did not meet the proposed regional criteria, ABAG would not recommend its approval to the state as a regionally significant project.

Example: A dude ranch is proposed on private land adjacent to a Regional Wilderness Park.

Application of Criteria: Although in general a dude ranch could be compatible with most open space lands, it might be found inconsistent because of proximity to lands with that particular wilderness designation.

SCENIC RESOURCES AND THE REGIONAL LANDSCAPE:

Example: A development is proposed on a prominent land form, such as Mount Diablo.

Application of Criteria: The design standards for visual resources could be used to determine if the project was consistent with regional visual values (although the development would still have to be reviewed in light of the full range of other ABAG policies).

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL SITES:

Example: Plans for marinas and housing conservation in the waterfront area of an historic seaport town.

Application of Criteria: Local plans would be reviewed for their sensitivity towards special neighborhoods, buildings, or historic sites which may exist within the particular area.

A PROPOSAL FOR AN URBANIZATION PROGRAM

The Open Space Task Force recognizes that the goals of the Regional Plan require directing and managing growth in positive directions as well as protecting vital areas of the region from development. Specifying the best means to direct and manage growth is beyond the scope of this Task Force. However, the group does offer the following framework for an urbanization program which it feels is vital to the realization of the critical area goals outlined in this document. It commends this framework to the consideration of the Regional Planning Committee.

Framework

An additional one and one-half to three million people are expected in the region by the year 2000. A key regional planning problem will be to provide the population with adequate shelter and community services without destroying the unique human and natural environment which exists in the Bay Area.

Although public policies are increasingly directing that urban development activities be channeled into existing built-up areas, it must be assumed that a significant amount of growth will still be accommodated through conversion of non-developed land to urban uses. The challenge, therefore, is to insure that the conversion process is consistent with regional objectives.

Goals

The following goals are suggested to guide urban development decisions at the regional level.

1. Urban activities should occur within or adjacent to existing urbanized areas.
2. Urban activities should generally not occur in lands identified as areas of critical environmental concern; if they do occur in these areas, they should be consistent with the policies designed to protect such areas. (See Critical Area policies in this document.)
3. Urban activities should enhance the economic vitality and fiscal integrity of public and private enterprise at both the local and regional level.
4. Urban activities should provide for maximum efficiency in capital expenditures for, and in operating expenditures connected with, such areawide services and utilities as potable water, natural gas, electricity, telephone, public transportation, highways and roadways, storm drainage, sewage collection and treatment.
5. Urban activities should make efficient use of energy resources.
6. Urban activities should minimize reliance on the automobile as a primary means of transportation and make most efficient use of the automobile when such form is utilized.
7. Urban activities should facilitate access to jobs.
8. Facilities which are required to satisfy the regional needs of agriculture, housing, commerce, industry, education, health and welfare (such as electric generating and transmission facilities, petroleum refining and storage facilities, industrial facilities, port facilities, airport facilities, medical centers, major educational institutions, and shopping and commercial centers), should be planned and located according to regional policies.

9. Urban form and design will be promoted which encourage self-identification and integrity of communities.

Principles for Application of Goals

In viewing decisions concerning growth adjacent to urban areas and other areas subject to development pressures two key principles should be followed:

1. There shall be no development in critical areas except where permitted by the Critical Area Plan.
2. In areas not identified as being critical, development decisions should still recognize intrinsic characteristics of the land and insure that these capabilities are not lost through inefficient or premature conversion to urban uses. The goals identified above should provide a means for evaluating alternative uses of the land.

Implementation

The Task Force recommends the following avenues be explored as means to implement a regional urbanization program. Many of these strategies are sometimes cited as "open space" implementation tools, but it is the opinion of the task force that they more properly belong as part of the strategy for guiding urban growth. Most of these methods go beyond the use of traditional land regulations and zoning and endeavor instead to address the root causes rather than simply the effects of current land development practices.

The implementation measures are listed below.

1. Tax assessment: The impacts of preferential assessment should be examined in a metropolitan context. Although it is a popular notion that practices such as the Williamson Act in California actually save "open space" a closer look has indicated some problems. A preferential taxation system which gives benefits to lands having certain characteristics (e.g., agricultural capability) may have adverse effects on the urban development process by shifting all urban pressure to other urban fringe lands which may be even less suitable for development. Taxation methods must respond to urban planning requirements in addition to resource management needs.

2. Transfer of development rights: This is an increasingly appealing proposal to shift development from one site to another through a combination of incentives, constraints, and compensatory devices. To date its main use has been to preserve properties in existing urban areas, and it has been largely untested as a device to redirect development from the urban fringe to central locations. It deserves to be explored as one of several strategies for redirecting metropolitan growth.

3. "Windfalls and wipeouts": ABAG should investigate ways whereby public agencies can (1) compensate certain landowners who are unfairly affected by public policies, and (2) recapture the windfall which frequently comes about as a result of public investment.

4. Utility pricing policy: Urban sprawl has been indirectly subsidized in America through utility and service pricing policies which do not adequately internalize costs for development on the urban fringe. Policies are needed to make such costs more closely reflect the larger social costs of development borne by society.

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5. Purchase plus zoning: This method consists of establishing predetermined land regulations on connected parcels of land on the urban fringe. This is usually accomplished through a combination of acquisition in fee title, purchase of development rights, and traditional zoning.

6. Land banking: In such a program a government buys land and holds it for future use as needed. In order to implement such a program, local governments would require the right to condemn privately owned property.

7. New administrative structure: Although the Task Force recognizes that the existing governmental apparatus is inadequate for addressing or implementing the urban development policies suggested in the above goals statement, this report makes no specific recommendation on new administrative structures. This alternative should be fully investigated at the appropriate time.

This report does not at this time recommend any of the above strategies although it proposes that each receive careful study during the development of a regional urbanization program.